United Nations S/2003/136

Security Council

Distr.: General
3 February 2003
English
Original: French

Letter dated 3 February 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the press release issued by the Government of the Rwandese Republic in response to press release SPKM 06/2003 issued by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) on 31 January 2003.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a Security Council document.

(*Signed*) Augustin **Muvunyi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

03-23462 (E) 030203 030203

Annex to the letter dated 3 February 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation

Press release

In the light of the allegations contained in press release SPKM 06/2003 issued by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) on 31 January 2003 (see appendix) concerning so-called "disturbing reports of troop movements in the east and north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the Government of the Rwandese Republic would like to state the following:

The Government of the Rwandese Republic categorically rejects the reports of the presence of Rwandan troops in the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo contained in the aforementioned press release, and notes that it withdrew all its troops in October 2002, a withdrawal that was confirmed in the release issued by MONUC itself.

The Government of the Rwandese Republic is concerned at the dissemination of unverified, biased and alarmist reports by MONUC, when its primary duty in such circumstances should be to verify any so-called "disturbing reports". This approach seriously jeopardizes the role and credibility of MONUC.

The Government of the Rwandese Republic notes that the procedure established by the signatories to the Lusaka peace accords (S/1999/815, annex) is that MONUC and the Joint Military Commission verify information provided to them by the signatories and report back.

The Rwandan Government takes this opportunity to demand the sources of the information and a related report.

The Government of the Rwandese Republic condemns any attempt to torpedo the commitments undertaken by the parties involved in the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and reiterates that it is fully disposed to working towards peace in the subregion.

Appendix

Press release SPKM 06/2003 issued by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)

(Kinshasa, 31 January 2003)

Disturbing reports on troop movements in the east and north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

MONUC has received disturbing reports of troop movements and of the following developments:

- Troop movements and an imminent attack by the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie — Goma (RCD/G) against Kanyabayonga, Lubero territory in Nord-Kivu, under the control of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Kisangani-mouvement de libération (RCD/K-ML).
- Presence of four battalions of the Congolese armed forces in Beni, in RCD/K-ML territory.
- Presence of Rwandan troops in Ituri.
- Movement of Ugandan troops — two Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) brigades — towards Mahagi, to the north of Bunia, near the Ugandan border.
- Presence of soldiers in Rwandan uniform in the Kivu districts.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Namanga Ngongi, is continuing his contacts with all the parties involved so as to obtain clarification regarding such reports.

Mr. Ngongi calls on all the parties concerned to refrain from any attack. If an attack occurred, that would only exacerbate the suffering of the Congolese people and would be a serious affront to the international community in its efforts to bring the peace process to a successful conclusion.

In any event, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General also reminds the parties concerned that they would be fully responsible if fighting resumes and if, as a result, this calls in question all the agreements concluded within the context of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.